Dear Joe and,

7/3/85

Your note and the clipping on Ed Epsteink (my pun) came at a good time: I had to take Lil shopping and could read while awaiting her. And much as I'd like to get to Wilmington for a reunion, it isn't possible because I can't drive more than 20 minutes at a time and can't use public transportation. When I got to my mother's, Lil's sister took time from work and drove us. And I zonked out on arrival. I thought I'd told you how the trip to Baltimore to be the guest of the Orioles exhausted me. Not easy tomunderstod but inevotable now. But perhaps Sam can stop off on his way back. It is very little out of the way or not out of the way at all, depending on his route. We'd like that, of course.

Epsteink is a professional picker of imaginary and nonesisting nits, from and of the right, and his book on the Warren Commission is based, as is all his subsequent writing of which I know, on invalid right-wing theorizing substituted for fact. He and others, especially Mark Lane, were out to "get" the liberal Earl Warren. And why not? Despite all the not good things he did, wasn't he the effective leader of the Supreme Court when it opted to take the side of the essentially friendless, to delineate rights, etc.

Epstein knows what it is to do a book over, one of hid apparent charges against Schevchenko, hereinafter S. Ep. did his entire book on Oswald over, chaging even the title, after an enormous dvertising campaign by Readers Digest began. It then was apparent that he had taken sides in an internal CIA controversy and was under the influence of the former chief of counterintelligence who was forced out in the wake of Watergate. James Jesus (right) Angleton is so paranbid it cannot be imagined how. He is a professional spook who, in any sane society, would not have hacked it. He made it on hate, paranoia and catering to the national policy of red hysteria. He trusted nobody (except Israeli intelligence, which he also respected) and even called heads of CIA Russian agents. The right can survive anything, particularly the more seriously flawed writing, if it suits right extreme ends.

There never was any doubt that S. was a genuine defector and that he'd worked for the CIA. It was quite scandalous when the women they provided him with sounded off, and as a result he was silent for some time. The CIA lies even when it does not have to, but it is probably true that it had nothing to do with the writing of the book. I am certain that if it had, the first draft would have been accepted and would not have been flawed as S's was. This does not quote them as saying they had nothing to do with the editing, as quite likely they didn't because there was no need for them to with professional editing available, and they had direct input to S in any event. What was done to jazz the book up is not abnormal. And if all the questions Epsteink raised that are not answered in the Times story, it would make no real difference anyway. In part because those t ings are of no real consequence and in part because it is normal to try to confuse the other side by changing fact.

I do not get the New Republic so I've mot read Epsteink's piece, butI can assure you that NR can't begin to pay for the costs involved in what Epsteink wrote. His commercializations have been profitable and he could have borne the costs himself but I think it is more likely that eaderz Digest did, with staffing. Unless Epsteink gave up his college job, I think at Harvard, he was not able to do that investigating anyway. RD gave him a large staff for his Oswald book, which is of the spirit of this scrivenning and as flawed.

It may help you appreciate the kind of genuinely despicable character Epsteink is to know that he did an apollgia for the FBI just before its Comntelproing operations were exposed, saying that all the allegations of the blacks against the FBI were untrue and that it had never, perish the thought, ever done any such thinhg. Before it was out, in the NewYorker, most of that issue, when John Mitchell was still attorney general, he plugged Epsteink's piece. On coast-to-coast TV, no less. Such terrible stuff never ~~works~~ hirts those of the right because they have a constiuency